

BLANKENSHIP DEP.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
AIKEN DIVISION
CASE NO.: 1:24-cv-02612-SAL-PJG

Alisha Johnson,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
Savannah River Nuclear)
Solutions,)
)
Defendant.)
_____)

DEPOSITION OF
Tamara Blankenship

Thursday, April 24, 2025

10:17 a.m. - 1:18 p.m.

The deposition of Tamara Blankenship was taken before Kimberly C. Young, a notary public in and for the State of South Carolina, commencing on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the offices of Cromer Babb & Porter, 1418 Laurel Street, Columbia, South Carolina, pursuant to Notice of Deposition and/or agreement of counsel.

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

1 APPEARANCES

2 Attorneys for the Plaintiff:

3 Jay Babb, Esquire
4 Jill Lesley, Esquire
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Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Jay@cromerbabb.com
6 Jill@cromerbabb.com

7 Attorney for the Defendant:

8 Phillips Lancaster McWilliams, Esquire
9 Fisher & Phillips, LLP
10 1320 Main Street
Suite 750
11 Columbia, SC 29211
pmcwilliams@fisherphillips.com

12

13 Also Present:

14 Alisha Johnson, Plaintiff
15 Rebecca Biasiny, Associate General Counsel, SRNS
Angela Baxley, Paralegal, SRNS

16 INDEX

17 Stipulations	4
18 Examination by Mr. Babb	4
19 Examination by Mr. McWilliams	75
20 Signature Sheet	78
21 Certificate	79

22

23

24

25

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

EXHIBITS

2	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 1	40
3	(Email Chain)	
4	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 2	49
5	(Email Chain)	
6	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 3	56
7	(Email Chain)	
8	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 4	59
9	(Review Board Documents)	
10	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 5	67
11	(Policy)	
12	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 6	71
13	(Notes from DRB meeting)	
14	Plaintiff's Exhibit Number 7	71
15	(Termination Notice)	

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

1 Q. Did you ever review any performance reviews of
2 Ms. Johnson?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Prior to the termination, were you involved in
5 any corrective actions or counselings against
6 Ms. Johnson?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And how many?

9 A. Two.

10 Q. Do you recall what those were?

11 A. The first was the altercation between Ms.
12 Johnson and Terry Stoudemire.

13 Q. Okay. And what was the second?

14 A. The second was at the termination.

15 Q. Were you involved in any corrective or
16 disciplinary action regarding the 2021
17 investigation of use of the computer or
18 government resources?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Who made -- who made the decision to discipline
21 Ms. Johnson regarding the Terry Stoudemire
22 incident?

23 A. There was conversation with management. They
24 recommended and I confirmed.

25 Q. What position did Ms. Johnson hold?

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

1 I'll just be referring that as 77. Do you
2 understand?

3 A. Understood.

4 Q. Okay. And that would be similar to some of the
5 other documents we may look at today as other
6 exhibits. The first page of Exhibit 1 is an
7 email chain. Have you ever seen this document
8 before?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And there's an email from you to William Carter
11 or Bill Carter. Who is Bill Carter?

12 A. Investigator for SRNS.

13 Q. And at this point, in August 24th, 2023, why
14 were you sending this to Mr. Carter?

15 A. He had requested information.

16 Q. Okay. The second page of this document has that
17 same email that was part of that chain we looked
18 at on the first page. This one references some
19 attachments. It says, "I've included the
20 contacts for the November '22 incident involving
21 Alisha and Terry." Did I read that correctly?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Okay. And what are contacts?

24 A. Contacts, we -- there are two forms of contacts.
25 One is an informative contact, which is just

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

1 formal documentation for information. The
2 second is a corrective contact, which starts the
3 disciplinary process.

4 Q. Are they -- are they different forms?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. The attachments that are listed on the second
7 page of this exhibit are Bates number 78. Are
8 Stoudemire contact, 112922 PDF; Johnson contact,
9 112822 PDF; and timeline.msg, which appears to
10 be an email message. Then there are three pages
11 at the end of this exhibit. Do those appear to
12 be the attachments to this email?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Let's look at the page marked as Bates
15 Number 80. This is -- would you call this an
16 informative contact?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. And this was issued to Ms. Johnson?

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. And the signature at the bottom, Ms. Johnson has
21 signed, but also Mr. Youngblood?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. The Bates Number 81, that's an informative
24 contact as well?

25 A. That is correct.

4/24/2025

TAMARA BLANKENSHIP

1 A. Not at that time.

2 Q. Okay. So how was -- how did that decision come
3 to be?

4 A. After the call, a DRB is convened. From there,
5 the board will consist of EEO, security, an
6 independent manager, the investigator will be
7 present, HR will be present, and management will
8 be present. And they go and state facts,
9 findings. Ms. Johnson will have an opportunity
10 to speak and an opportunity to bring any
11 character witnesses that she may choose.

12 Q. At the time of the DRB, or the disciplinary
13 panel meeting, was there a recommendation at
14 termination -- of termination, or would that
15 come at the conclusion of the meeting?

16 A. That would come at the conclusion of the
17 meeting. Not everyone sits in on that. There's
18 only three voting members or panel, the folks on
19 the panel. Everyone else is dismissed for that.

20 Q. What -- well, not every investigation leads to a
21 DRB?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. So what type of, I guess, conduct or offenses
24 trigger the need to have a DRB?

25 A. For this particular one, it was because she had

From: [Tamara Blankenship](#)
To: William Carter
Subject: RE: Investigation Documents
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023 12:31:02 PM

Ok will do.

From: William Carter <William.Carter@srs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 24, 2023 12:30 PM
To: Tamara Blankenship <Tamara.Bankenship@srs.gov>
Subject: RE: Investigation Documents

Thank you! I think the only other thing that I need to ask you for is something showing the promotion process of Overton. She alleged in her charge that this was also discrimination against her, however, I have been told she did not apply for that position. Having the posting and list of candidates showing who was selected would help me dispel that aspect of this.

From: Tamara Blankenship <[Tamara.Bankenship@srs.gov](#)>
Sent: Thursday, August 24, 2023 10:54 AM
To: William Carter <[William.Carter@srs.gov](#)>
Subject: Investigation Documents

OUO

Hi Bill,

I have included the contacts for the Nov 22 incident involving Alisha and Terry. I have witness/management statements as well if needed for supporting documentation. I have included the timeline given to me by management for the meeting held in October. The Lead Planner and SPOC are not official positions but rather an opportunity for development within the group. The outcome of the meeting was management will allow all Work Window Managers to rotate from execution to SPOC, to lead planner, back to execution, rotation to adjust each month. William Brent Owenby was promoted to WWM SGL 34 on July 1, 2022 and resigned from the company on Feb. 9, 2023. Alisha was a WWM SGL 34.

****For Technical Services HR Support, please include Willie Larkin on all email traffic****

Tamara Blankenship
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
HR Business Partner | Technical Services
Phone: 803-761-4410



From: Tamara Blankenship
To: William Carter
Subject: Investigation Documents
Date: Thursday, August 24, 2023 10:54:03 AM
Attachments: Stoudemire Contact 11.29.22.pdf
Johnson Contact 11.28.22.pdf
Time Line.msg

OUO

Hi Bill,

I have included the contacts for the Nov 22 incident involving Alisha and Terry. I have witness/management statements as well if needed for supporting documentation. I have included the timeline given to me by management for the meeting held in October. The Lead Planner and SPOC are not official positions but rather an opportunity for development within the group. The outcome of the meeting was management will allow all Work Window Managers to rotate from execution to SPOC, to lead planner, back to execution, rotation to adjust each month. William Brent Owenby was promoted to WWM SGL 34 on July 1, 2022 and resigned from the company on Feb. 9, 2023. Alisha was a WWM SGL 34.

****For Technical Services HR Support, please include Willie Larkin on all email traffic****

Tamara Blankenship
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
HR Business Partner | Technical Services
Phone: 803-761-4410

From: Frederick Youngblood
To: Edward Bodie; Tamara Blankenship
Subject: Time Line
Date: Monday, November 14, 2022 1:26:17 PM

FYI

6/2021 Owenby was asked to backfill Lead Planner position due to personnel moves (qualified planner)

7/1/2022 Owenby promoted to WWM and ask to continue lead planner Function due to organizational needs

8/8/2022 Ms. Johnson expressed concern over about her not being asked to fill the SPOC or lead planner position. To Porter and then E. Bodie.

8/22/2022 Bodie met with Porter and Owenby and discussed the situation. Mr. Owenby was instructed he would complete his WWM and training and Mr. Youngblood was counseled on management practices and instructed to place all WWMs back in rotation as business needs will allow. Owenby following facility priority planning issues at Porter's request.

10/3/2022 WWM rotation adjusted to allow all WWM's to rotate from execution to SPOC, to lead planner, back to execution. Rotation to adjust each month. SPOC and Lead Planner Roles will be a monthly rotation.

10/20/2022 Ms. Johnson requested a meeting with Bodie where she asked if it were possible to her to be moved to another position. Although not unhappy, she felt that she might feel better in another position due to the above mentioned situation. Bodie also asked if there were any issues in the work place with her, Porter or any other peers and she stated none. Bodie stated he would take it a look but also asked if he could not move her, how would she feel. Ms. Johnson stated she would continue to perform her duties and adjust as she needed to perform her job. As a follow up Bodie spoke with Porter and at this time there were no issues with Ms. Johnson or himself.

10/31/2022 WWM rotation adjusted for all WWM's to be working execution, SPOC and Lead Planner roles shelved (not being filled).

Week of 11/7/2023: Bodie pulsed groups that had potential to groups for a potential swap and did not find any volunteers. There was actually only one real consideration as all of the other teams have new WWMs and the others are in critical positions.

Porter Youngblood
H Area WMC MANAGER
704-H RM B-20
208-0927
803-646-5322

01AU000079
24064.0083

Personal and Confidential
M&O Employee Information Record

NOTE OSR 5-317 is to be used by M&O Employees and OSR 5-317A is to be used by LW Employees.

Proc. Ref. 5B		
Routing	Initial	Date
Employees Field File		
Business Unit HR		
Personnel Coordinator		
HR Records, 703-47A		

Instructions

- Section 1 If Employee is on loan, manager should consult with home department.
- Section 2 Indicate type of record.
- Section 3 Manager will give a brief summary of the discussion.
- Section 4 Manager will outline specific mutually agreed upon goals and should make every effort to assist the employee in meeting these goals, if applicable.
- Section 5 Employee and manager should sign and date the completed form.
See instructions in the top right-hand corner of this form for routing. Reference Manual 5B, Human Resources, for distribution of copies.

Section 1 - Employee Information

Name Alisha Johnson	User ID A2765	Employee Type <input checked="" type="radio"/> Exempt <input type="radio"/> SOP <input type="radio"/> Nonexempt	Job Title Work Window Manager
Business Unit Maintenance WPC & Site Services	Org Code C2321A	Loaned Org Code	ASD 08/08/1998 PSD 08/08/1998

Section 2 - Type of Record and Routing

<input type="checkbox"/> Commandatory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informative	<input type="checkbox"/> Qualifying or Trying Appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/> Discontinuance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Records • Employee's Field File 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Unit HR • Personnel Coordinator • Employee's Field File 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel Coordinator • HR Records • Employee's Field File 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Personnel Coordinator • HR Records
<input type="radio"/> Pay Approved <input type="radio"/> Pay Denied			

Days/Months _____

Section 3 - Summary

You are being given this informative as a result of a verbal altercation with a fellow employee on 11/22/22 in H-Area. This altercation escalated to a point where voices were raised that began to disturb the surrounding workers. This altercation also involved a narrative that could be interpreted as discriminatory and racial. You should ensure that your actions and discussions in the work place remain professional and respectful. If you find yourself in a situation where you feel someone else is not treating you respectfully you should immediately report the circumstances to your supervision. You understand that any future activity of this nature could result in additional disciplinary actions.

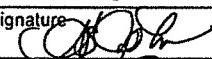
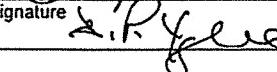
Section 4 - Recommend Development Actions

1. Review the Rules of Conduct, Human Resources Manual 5B, Procedure 1-4, Section 5.1
2. Review the Rules of Conduct, Human Resources Manual 5B, Procedure 1-4, section 5.13.2
3. Review the Work Place Violence Policy Manual 1-01, Procedure 2.19, • Actions disrupting normal work activities, such as yelling, wild gestures, or demands for an immediate answer, • Telling jokes or making offensive comments regarding violence or violent events, • Harassment, surveillance, or stalking.

Section 5 - Employee Comments (Optional)

I understand the potential perception and the significance of this situation and the importance of maintaining a good work environment.

Section 6 - M&O Signatures

M&O Employee (Print) Alisha Johnson	Signature 	Date 11/28/22
M&O Manager (Print) Frederick P. Youngblood	Signature 	Date 11/28/22

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

May be exempt from public release under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552),
exemption number and category 6 - Personal Privacy. Department of Energy review required before public release.

Name/Org: _____ Date: _____ Guidance (if applicable): _____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY
(When Filled In)

Personal and Confidential M&O Employee Information Record

NOTE OSR 5-317 is to be used by M&O Employees and OSR 5-317A is to be used by LW Employees.

Proc. Ref. 5B		
Routing	Initial	Date
Employees Field File		
Business Unit HR		
Personnel Coordinator		
HR Records, 703-47A		

Instructions

Section 1 If Employee is on loan, manager should consult with home department.

Section 2 Indicate type of record.

Section 3 Manager will give a brief summary of the discussion.

Section 4 Manager will outline specific mutually agreed upon goals and should make every effort to assist the employee in meeting these goals, if applicable.

Section 5 Employee and manager should sign and date the completed form.

See instructions in the top right-hand corner of this form for routing. Reference Manual 5B, Human Resources, for distribution of copies.

Section 1 - Employee Information

Name	User ID	Employee Type	Job Title
Terry Stoudemire	W6461	<input type="radio"/> Exempt <input checked="" type="radio"/> SOP <input type="radio"/> Nonexempt	H-Area Senior Planner
Business Unit	Org Code	Loaned Org Code	ASD PSD
Maintenance WPC & Site Services	C2321AB		02/25/1985 02/25/1985

Section 2 - Type of Record and Routing

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commendatory | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informative | <input type="checkbox"/> Qualifying or Trying Appraisal | <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinuance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Records • Employee's Field File | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Unit HR • Personnel Coordinator • Employee's Field File | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel Coordinator • HR Records • Employee's Field File | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Personnel Coordinator • HR Records |
| | | <input type="radio"/> Pay Approved | <input type="radio"/> Pay Denied |
- Days/Months _____

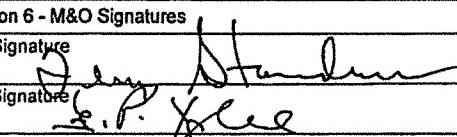
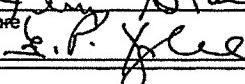
Section 3 - Summary

You are being given this informative as a result of a verbal altercation with a fellow employee on 11/22/22 in H-Area. This altercation escalated to a point where voices were raised that began to disturb the surrounding workers. This altercation also involved a narrative that could be interpreted as discriminatory and racial. You understand that the continued pursuit of the conversation shows an aggressive behavior, when asked to stop, you understand the need to cease the conversation and remove yourself from the area. You should ensure that your actions and discussions in the work place remain professional and respectful. If you find yourself in a situation where you feel aggressive behavior and disrespect is being displayed, you should immediately remove yourself from the situation and report the circumstances to your supervision. You understand that any future activity of this nature could result in additional disciplinary actions.

Section 4 - Recommend Development Actions

1. Review the Rules of Conduct, Human Resources Manual 5B, Procedure 1-4, Section 5.1
2. Review the Rules of Conduct, Human Resources Manual 5B, Procedure 1-4, section 5.13.2
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Section 5 - Employee Comments (Optional)

Section 6 - M&O Signatures		
M&O Employee (Print)	Signature	Date
Terry L. Stoudemire		11/29/22
M&O Manager (Print)	Signature	Date
Frederick P. Youngblood		11/29/2022

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exemption number and category 6 - Personal Privacy. Department of Energy review required before public release.

Name/Org: _____ Date: _____ Guidance (if applicable): _____

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